SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL LECTURES

Educational Reconstruction in India

DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN

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EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION IN INDIA

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SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL LECTURES

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THE PATEL MEMORIAL LECTURES

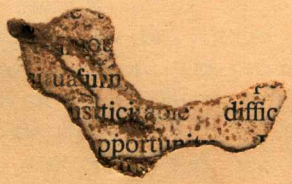
All India Radio introduced in 1955 a programme of lectures in memory of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who, apart from the great role he played in the achievement and consolidation of freedom, was free India's first Minister for Information and Broadcasting. An annual feature, these lectures are intended to contribute to the existing knowledge on a given subject and to promote awareness of contemporary problems. Each year, some eminent specialist who has devoted thought and study to any branch of knowledge or public affairs is invited to give through All India Radio, in a popular manner, the results of his study and experience for the benefit of the public.

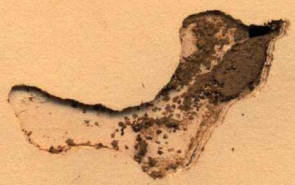
The first lecture on "The Good Administrator" was given by Shri C. Rajagopalachari in 1955. The second series was broadcast by Dr. K. S. Krishnan, F.R.S., in 1956. His theme was "The New Era in Science". The third series of lectures, on "Unity and Diversity of Life", was delivered [illegible] difficulties, J.B.S. Haldane, F.R.S. [illegible] opportunities.

For the 1958 series All India Radio invited Dr. Zakir Husain, the eminent educationist. As

president of the committee of educationists appointed at the First Conference of National Education held at Wardha in 1937, Dr. Zakir Husain gave concrete shape to Mahatma Gandhi's scheme of basic education. He has been Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia (Delhi) and of Aligarh University. He has been a member of the Rajya Sabha, and served on the Press Commission and the University Grants Commission. Dr. Zakir Husain has been Governor of Bihar since 1957.

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL MEMORIAL LECTURES DELIVERED AT VIGYAN BHAVAN, NEW DELHI, ON DECEMBER 12, 13 AND 14, 1958 AND LATER BROADCAST BY ALL INDIA RADIO





I

I must begin by thanking the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for inviting me to deliver this series of three Patel Memorial Lectures. Having spent most of my working life in Delhi, I usually do not need much persuasion to come here, and feel the joy of home-coming when I do. But I am particularly happy at this occasion, for it enables me to associate myself with the memory of one I had known and held in high esteem as a valiant fighter for the country's freedom and as a great builder of its future greatness on the firm foundations of an integrated political structure. The bringing together of ill-assorted administrative units into a balanced pattern by integrating more than 550 princely States with the rest of the country was made possible [illegible] the wisdom and the strength of the gr[illegible]ular. The precision of vision, the sureness of [illegible] the al[illegible] uncanny grasp of detail, the fi[illegible] the understanding of men and affairs, and the rare quality of transmitting to the means the urgency of a great

end—these and similar qualities, which manifested themselves during the achievement by this great statesman of the tremendous task he had set himself and which he accomplished with such unusual thoroughness, ensure for him an immortal place among the great architects of our national life. Let us pay our tribute of admiration and gratitude to his memory.

In doing so, however, we may not forget that the edifice of national life is never complete, it is always under construction, it grows and expands, the details within its broad constructional outlines constantly demand elaboration, its innumerable elements have to be kept in organic balance, for each one affects and is affected by all the others. The process of integration does not end with the integration of administrative units; it is a continuing process and in the broad outline we have chosen for our national development this unending process is the very basis of our national existence; for we have chosen to organize our people's life as a secular democracy and, since we are resolved to evolve for ourselves a socialistic pattern of society, also as a social democ[illegible]ducation, true education, is the life [illegible] of such democracy.

This may sound a platitude. But a little thought would show that it is only too true. Other

forms of social organization can do, and have done, with a provision for the education of the elite only and left the rest to fend for themselves as best they might; or they can have, and have had, varying types of provision of schooling for the various classes and the different ranks. These knights and citizens and gentlemen, these patricians or merchants or guildmen had their own more or less defined educational ideal. In many cases, these varied ideals found a shared basis in a common religious belief. The diversity of educational ideals found a unity in religion. This is not possible in a secular society, for the comprehensive society which contains the various sections and communities and professions is not a religious unity. To hammer into shape an educational ideal of the older kind, valid for all as a mould into which each citizen's mind could be poured and shaped, would be an absolutely hopeless enterprise. It would be stupid to attempt it in a democratic society with its myriad individual aptitudes seeking to develop and grow in order to contribute to the evolution of a morally free and autonomous personality.

This situation, which superficially appears to create an inextricable difficulty, is in reality education's opportunity. For it enables the democratic educator to dispose of the mistaken

notion that education must be the shaping of the educand according to a given generic type, according to a ready-made educational ideal with a sharp delineated content. It enables him to realize that education is not really a pressing into shape but a letting loose and setting free which respects the unique and specific individuality of the educand. It gives him an opportunity and presents him with a challenge to enunciate a concept of education which can be the basis of educational reconstruction in a secular social democracy. For our future as a people will depend in no small measure on the ideas and principles which inspire Indian education, and on how its evolution helps in the growth and development of the democratic way of life, on how it provides for the full growth and development of individuality, and on how it harnesses harmoniously-developed individuality to social ends, on how it probes into the secrets of the self, and how it masters the mysteries of selflessness.

If education is that important—and I presume your agreement that it is—then mere tinkering with administrative details by adding a year to one stage and subtracting it from another, by the addition of a subject here and a subject there, by the replacement of bad textbooks by, if possible, worse, by giving to

existing schools a different name, and so on, the immense challenge of educational reconstruction will not be met. It will also not be met by an expansion of the educational apparatus without a full and operative consciousness of its real aims and objectives and without a close correspondence between the ends and the means adopted for their realization. A deeper and more widespread understanding of the nature of education and of the functioning of a democratic society is essential to a sane reconstruction of our educational edifice.

To take education first. At the very outset we should rid ourselves of the all too generally held notion that education is putting information into an otherwise empty head. No, education is not a dressing up, it is not writing on a *tabula rasa.* It is not the imposition of just this system of training or that system of garniture, decided, all but arbitrarily, in view of a certain industrial or economic survey or in obedience to the dictates of a certain political ideology. The basic principle of education in a democracy should be reverence for the individuality of the child, the child who is to grow into the citizen, upon whose full development and intelligent and willing participation in making it a more and more just and more and more morally perfect social organism the very fate of democracy

depends. For democracy is, indeed, nothing but the full discharge by every citizen of duties he is competent to perform—duties to himself and duties to his society. This competence can only be the result of aptitudes discovered and developed to their fullest by education.

How does this happen? How is education possible? I shall briefly state my view. The process of education or the culture of the mind, as I see it, bears a striking resemblance to the process of the growing development of the human body. As the body, from its embryonic beginnings, grows and develops to its full stature by means of agreeable, assimilable food, movement and exercise, in accordance with physical and chemical laws, so does the mind grow and develop from its original dispositions to its full evolutionary cultivation by means of mental food and mental exercise according to the laws of mental growth.

We should never lose track of the basic fact that the mind to be educated is the individual mind. The food on which it has to thrive and develop consists of the goods of culture that surround it—all of them concretizations of the mental effort of other minds. To understand the first element of this mutual relationship we should follow in broad outlines the

development of the individual human mind from infancy onwards.

The individual human mind, it may be unnecessary to remind you, comes to the world as a bundle of instincts. It manifests, to begin with, only physical functions as the result of the physical instincts, to be followed soon by psychical functions which in their turn are the outflow of psychical instincts and impulses.

In the exercise of these physical and psychical functions the child experiences his first satisfactions and his first disappointments. He begins to like actions and things, to evaluate them, to set values on them. This process of evaluation, of associating positive or negative value with his experience is as fundamental to mental growth as any other. As these evaluations accumulate in the child's memory, a great step forward is taken in the mental life of the child—the consciousness of Ends and Means is awakened.

He starts aiming at things and actions which he likes and values and, in the context of his modest but constantly growing experience, adopts means to reach those aims and to experience those values which are attached to them. Gradually the ends to which value is attached increase in number. The effectiveness

of means in the attainment of the valued ends rivets the interests of the child on these means. They too become valuable on account of the valued end they subserve. A system of Values-Ends-and-Interests develops and gives to the growing individuality its peculiar mental structure.

The values experienced in the early stages of development are, however, exclusively sensual material values. The evaluation scale registers only the pleasant and the unpleasant, the comfortable and the uncomfortable, bodily freedom or bodily restraint, sensual enjoyment or sensual annoyance. The whole system of Values-Ends-and-Interests remains, so to say, on the sensual level, a level which is shared by the higher animals with man in varying nuances.

But the human individuality develops a third group of functions which we may call the intellectual and the spiritual. The satisfaction of those functions also leads to an experience of values, but these are values of quite a different order from those just mentioned. One has only to mention them by their names—the True, the Beautiful, the Good and the Holy as against Physical Health, Pleasure of the Senses, Material Gain, and Sensual Love—to indicate the vast difference that separates them. These bring with them a particularly satisfying sense of

permanence and absolute worth and validity. They press for commitment. They insist on being realized. No sooner have they gripped us, they become the predominant and decisive elements in shaping our scale of values. Sensual values are cheerfully subordinated to them. They transform and transmute. Education in the truest sense of the word is helping the mind of the educand to experience these absolute moral and intellectual values, so that they in turn urge him on to be committed to realize them, as best he may, in his work and in his life. As man's animal being expresses itself in the realization of ephemeral subjective values, his moral and spiritual being propels him to experience and realize permanent objective values. They give a meaning and purpose to his existence. For the animal, life has no meaning and no significance, it has no self-chosen purpose, it just lives on as it must. For man, on the other hand, when he has once experienced these moral absolute values, commitment to them gives a meaning and significance to life—the service, the maintenance and the realization of these absolute values. They lend eternity to his moments.

Now, the mind can experience these ultimate values only through the goods of culture which it comes across and which, in their turn, are

the product of the mental effort of some other individual or group of individuals who have concretized these values in them. These cultural goods of society are represented by its science, by its arts, its techniques, its religions, its customs, its moral and legal codes, its social forms, its personalities, its schools, its institutions, and so on. They are, all of them, in the last analysis, products of the intellectual and moral energy of individual or collective mind. They are the intellectual and moral values of mind objectified. They are the expressions of man's moral and spiritual being.

These goods of culture are the only means of setting the educational process into motion; they are the only food for the nourishment of the human mind. The encounter with these cultural goods is mediated by the home, by the school, the institutions of higher learning, the public institutions, and the all-embracing activities and examples of public life. The growing mind takes hold of them, unconsciously at first and more and more deliberately later, and uses them for its specific human development. When these goods of culture are so used, they become educative goods. They were first products of culture; cultivated minds had produced them; they now cultivate minds, educate them

It is, however, important to remember that every mind cannot make use of the same cultural goods for its cultivation. Every individual has from birth his own specific way of reacting to the world of men and things around him. We trace this to the peculiar configuration of his physical and psychical functional dispositions and call this specific mode of reacting, which expresses itself in feeling, willing and acting as well as in perceiving and thinking, his native individuality. On the foundations of this original individuality, hardly susceptible to any significant change, is built up, with the help of the objective culture in which it lives and moves and has its being, a more developed individuality, a *Lebensform,* a life-form as Spranger has called it. Education is the individualized subjective revivification of objective culture. It is the transformation of the objective into the subjective mind. It is an individually organized sense of values awakened by goods of culture which are embodiments of the values accessible in experience to the person concerned.

If this is what education is or should be, there are two kinds of considerations which deserve our attention: (1) considerations which, in my view, hold good for all education, and (2) considerations which should be kept in view in the education which society organizes

for all its members. I shall take the first group first—considerations which hold good for all education.

Of all the principles which flow out, as it were, from the concept of education as we have formulated it, the one that appears to be of special significance for a democratic society and which is, perhaps, the most commonly ignored in all educational organisations is the principle of individuality. It says, what should have been obvious, as the basic axiom of the educational process, that the cultivation or education of the individual mind is possible only by means of cultural goods whose mental structure wholly or at least partially corresponds to its own mental relief. The specific mental constitution of the educand, namely, his individuality, determines his original indigenous system of Values-Ends-and-Interests. These are directed towards goods of culture which are the products of similar mental constitutions, embodiments of similar values, achievements of similar ends and realization of similar interests. This system of Values-Ends-and-Interests which characterizes each individual may be said to represent the totality of that individual life, and so, in the pursuit of those interests, all the aspects of individuality get, so to say, their exercise and attain their growth. This is then followed by

grasping and grappling with similar cultural goods of higher complexity and the mind proceeds from strength to strength in its development. And, what is quite natural, these interests usually branch off into newer and fresher side-interests and these new interests sometimes vie with the original ones in importance and vehemence and are responsible for the growth and development of the other constituents of the individual mental structure. The original technical-practical interest of an active boy may well grow into theoretical and aesthetic and even religious interest. But, by and large, you cannot hope to educate the theoretically-inclined boy or girl except through the theoretical goods of culture, and you can bring him to a more or less effective understanding and appreciation of the other regions of culture also primarily through theoretical goods. The true culture of the mind of an aesthetically gifted pupil is possible only through goods of the aesthetic type. One would attempt in vain to educate him through goods representing a theoretical or practical mental structure. The door to culture can be opened for him only by means of the goods of the aesthetic type. Once this door to culture is opened by the key specially suited to a certain pupil, many avenues may lead into the vista, for regions of culture are

not isolated islands entirely detached one from the other; they are joined to each other by a thousand connecting links. From art to science and technique, from science to art and technique, from technique to science and art a thousand transitions in a thousand nuances are possible. But if some of the forms of psychic structure are entirely absent from a mind, then the cultural goods corresponding to them cannot be the means of cultivating it. We cannot bring the unmusical ear to experience the real beauty of a great symphony and get its spiritual nourishment from it. We cannot hope to cultivate the mind of a colour-blind person through masterpieces of painting. We knock in vain to open out before most of our children, bursting with practical activity, the windows to the cultivation of the mind by means of theoretical instruction. Even that most precious cultural good, a great personality, can make its contribution to the cultivation of other minds only through the basic attitudes of a social mental structure—through sympathy, love, confidence and reverence. Even personality can speak to us only in our language, the language of our soul, which is the language of our specific mental constitution. Entirely alien structures represented in a personality are beyond our comprehension and we can pass by such a

personality without being any the better for it. Personalities embodying mental structures analogous to our own can grip us as few things can, and help us in the course of our intellectual, moral and spiritual development. The basic axiom of education is the congruence and correspondence of the mental-moral structure of mind of the educand and the structure of the good or goods of culture serving to educate, cultivate and develop it. "Culture", as Simmel has well said, "is the path of the mind's sojourn from a narrow closed unity, through an unfolding, expanding diversity, to a developed, expanded unity."

I do not propose to detain you here with the extremely valuable and interesting work that has been done on the classification of individual mental configurations. That would take long, and length can, in a lecture, render the interesting at least boring. But I do wish to share with you a classification which has been suggested by the great German educator, Georg Kerschensteiner. I do so specially, because I would be using some of his terminology later in these lectures and because his work is not so well known in this country, and, if I may interpolate a personal remark, also because I owe to him almost the entire framework of my educational thinking, which the subsequent

privilege of sitting at Gandhiji's feet and working out some of his educational insights helped to strengthen and deepen and enrich and to make a shaky theoretical structure a part of my being, for it transmuted words into commitment.

Kerschensteiner starts by noticing two basic psychological dispositions of individuals : contemplative and active disposition. Pure contemplation does not concern itself with acting on or producing anything in the outside objective world. But it should not, for that reason, be equated with the passive, the inert, the inactive. It does work up what it imbibes of the outside objective world. It is not just passively receptive. It involves the inner mental activity of viewing and considering and reflecting and meditating and giving a relevance and a meaning to the elements of consciousness. It is an act or attitude of significant, meaningful perception, forming and shaping and creating in the realm of consciousness. A great deal, indeed, of mental activity is involved in it. But it is not active in the sense of the other basic attitude which prevails among human individuals, which Kerschensteiner has named the active, in the sense of being directed towards the realization of objective factual relationships in the world of phenomena. This activity of the

contemplative as well as of the active attitude can be either mainly imitative or mainly creative. The imitative activity, in contemplation as well as in action, can be either purely mechanical or may be preceded by a contemplative operation of comprehending what it seeks to imitate.

Contemplation and action, again, can each of them be of two kinds in view of their aim, end and purpose. One can either be moved to contemplation by the perception of objects or of some of their aspects, in the region of sense experience, or by their relations to something beyond experience : the end or the purpose is either immanent or transcendent. In the first case it can either be interested in the reality and existence of things, their being and becoming, how they came to be and cease to be; or it can be interested in their purpose, their significance, their value. Both these attitudes of contemplation we can call theoretical : pure theoretical in the first and teleologic theoretical in the second case. The scientific goods of culture are the results of the objectification of these two attitudes. In both of them there is a consciousness of separation not only between the subject and the object, between the contemplator and the thing contemplated, but also between the form and the content of the latter.

In cases where contemplation is not concerned with the validity and reality of things but with their outer or inner appearance, although the distinction between the subject and the object still persists, that between the form and the content vanishes. One does not in such cases recognize the content by an act of reflection but by direct experience. This is the aesthetic attitude. Its objectifications produce the aesthetic, the artistic goods of culture.

The psychological attitude, which gets its satisfaction by the contemplation of transcendental value-relationships, is called the religious attitude. In some of its extreme manifestations, such as the mystic union, not only the distinction of the form and the content but even that of the subject and the object is obliterated, as in cases of ecstasy. The objectifications of this attitude produce the religious goods of culture, its religious symbols and codes and ceremonial and, by no means the least important, its religious personalities. For the genuine mystic or religious experience sets a torch aflame that burns through life, giving warmth and light to all who come close to it.

Now, to pass on from the contemplative to the active attitude. This seeks to objectify factual relationships. It, too, can be of two kinds, according to the nature of its end or

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Page 25, lines 13 and 14 : please *read as*
or at the enrichment and ennoblement of one's
moral personality. We may call it ego-centric-

Page	73,	line	18 :	*read*	objectives.	*for*	objective
Page	74,	line	6 :	*read*	most	*for*	first
Page	82,	line	12 :	*add*	less	*after*	other
Page	84,	line	24 :	*add*	changing	*after*	imperceptibly
Page	87,	line	14 :	*read*	tamely	*for*	timely
Page	95,	line	16 :	*add*	I	*before*	guess
Page	97,	line	11 :	*read*	acquire	*for*	acquires
Page	100,	line	2 :	*add*	,	*after*	activity

purpose. The end or purpose of an action is determined by the value one seeks to realize by means of that action. The satisfaction one derives from an action is due either to the value which the action has directly for the doer or to the value which it has in producing satisfaction in others; which is the same thing as saying that the active attitude is either ego-centric, self-centred, or hetero-centric, other-centred. The ego-centric active attitude, again, can either aim at the acquisition, preservation or expansion of the material apparatus of life, moral personality. We may call it ego-centric- or at the enrichment and ennoblement of one's material in the first case, ego-centric-ideal in the second. The roots of ego-centric action lie in the soil of self-preservation and self-assertion; those of hetero-centric action in sympathy and affection. The hetero-centric active attitude can aim at (1) the satisfaction of someone, not the doer, or of some group to which the doer himself does not belong; or (2) it may aim at the satisfaction of a group of which the actor is himself also a member. We have the altruistic attitude in the first case, the social attitude in the second; and (3) there is a third active attitude, that in which the value of the action to the doer lies in the action itself, independent of any individual or group satisfaction.

This is the asocial active attitude, or the objective attitude.

Kerschensteiner has thus derived three basic contemplative types—the theoretical contemplative, the aesthetic contemplative, and the religious contemplative—and three basic active types—the theoretic, the aesthetic and the religious—each one of them in four variations : (1) the ego-centric, (2) the social, (3) the altruistic and (4) the objective. Pure types are, indeed, rare; the configuration of individuality depends not only on the dominance of one or more of these basic forms, but also on the varying degrees of intensity in which the several attitudes enter into its composition.

I am afraid this rather concentrated version of an eminent educator's classification of individual dispositions must have been, to express it with an understatement, a little boring. But I believe it is something of a relief for bored audience to know that the person perpetrating the boring infliction is at least conscious of his guilt. For the situation becomes hopeless if he is blissfully ignorant of what he is doing ! As a consolation I might tell you that I, in my turn, have tried, but for an involuntary yawn, to face similar situations with almost heroic self-restraint. Let me hasten to testify that so have you !

Pleasantries apart, I do think that one of the most fruitful tasks of scientific education and cultural psychology should be to discover the various types of mental structure and Values-Ends-Interests systems on the one hand and the educational values immanent in cultural goods of different kinds on the other. Much work has already been done in these fields and although Indian educationists and psychologists may well be expected to exert themselves to extend the frontiers of knowledge in these fields, educational policy-makers and educators may apply themselves to the more modest and less high-sounding but, perhaps, the more urgent work of using the insights that are already available.

Now I come to the second principle.

A corollary of the principle of individuality in education is the consideration due to the stage of development of the educand. The process of education is a continuing process in which the journey is as important as the destination. For, indeed, one never arrives! Every stage in it has its importance and significance. It would be thoroughly mistaken to consider the various stages as merely preparatory to something that is supposed to happen at the remote end. A rather early and elementary stage in the progress of education, graduation or, well, getting a doctorate, is raised to the

thoroughly undeserved pedestal of being the end, where one might stay out making, the rest of the lifelong adventure of education almost meaningless and vitiating with almost vicious thoroughness the enchanting and energizing march through the earlier stages in which enough strength could have been built up for the equally, perhaps more, exciting journey ahead. The immediate can be sacrificed to the ultimate in education only at the latter's cost. All preparation, as the great German educational thinker, Schleiermacher, has somewhere aptly observed, must at the same time be satisfying experience, all satisfying experience also a preparation. It should be the concern of every well-organized system of education not to seek officiously to influence the speed of the pupil's mental growth. If the school is not to be a training factory for producing men as if they were machines designed to perform predetermined jobs, if it is a place of education, as it well might aspire to be, it should provide for the development to maturity of every stage in the pupil's growth and also be vigilantly on guard lest it miss the evidences of the onset of the next stage. For pulling and pushing can both be disastrously bad in education.

Kerschensteiner has, in his *Theorie der Bildung,* characterized three chief periods of

development in early life, each of seven years' duration. The first period up to seven years of age he calls the age of play, the second from 7 to 14 the age of ego-centric, and the third from 14 to 21, that of hetero-centric interests of work. Each stage should be respected in its own right and not made subordinate to the succeeding ones. The spontaneity of play and its carefree objectlessness should not be destroyed in order to train in skills. Play is its own end; the child in the age of play does not set himself any objective outside his play, he does not even aim at developing skills for playing the play well. We could, if we were wiser and not only older, so direct his play that he might, in the course of his pleasurable activity, by repetition of actions or otherwise, develop a certain skill in their performance and this might serve in the succeeding period of work as means for the fulfilment of his self-set aims and he might then deliberately develop them further with that end in view. Play may not be sought to degenerate into a task.

The age of ego-centric work, which emerges almost imperceptibly out of the play age, is still characterized by an active but, this time, purposive, practical disposition, partly technical and partly social. Except in very rare cases theoretical and aesthetic contemplation seems

still to be rather remote. In the age group 7 to 14 the school should provide for satisfying the active practical urges. It may arrange the work projects in such a manner that without depriving the pupils of the satisfaction that would come from the exercise of their practical technical and social urges, the foundations of theoretical and contemplative activity at a later period are, perhaps, also laid. The opposite tendencies, observable in most school systems, of premature forcing of the talented, usually prompted by highly educated parents who want their child to have several tries at competitive examinations, and the unimaginative exercise of bureaucratic uniformity which seeks to hold back the hare to march in step with the tortoise, both offend equally against the consideration due to the actual stage of development of the child.

I now come to the third consideration.

The first two considerations we have already dealt with flow out from the concept of education as an inner formation and not an outward addition. The considerations, as you would remember, of the natural individual make-up of the educand and the particular stage of his development, are both of them of basic importance in the classification and organization and building up of types of schools in a system.

The third and the fourth considerations which I will now place before you are concerned with the operation of the educative act. These are the principles of Totality and of Activity. I feel I have just time enough today to deal briefly with the first of these—Totality. I shall deal with Activity as an educational principle at the next lecture.

The principle of Totality demands that the educative act should have a total impact on the educand. Educational measures should be directed, that is, to the development of the whole mental structure and not to that of only an aspect or part thereof. No less an educator than the great Pestalozzi cried himself hoarse bringing home to people the organic unity of the educative activity, its concern at the same time with, what he termed, the intellectual, the moral and the physical basic powers of the child or, in simpler language, of the head, the heart and the hand. In our own land Gandhiji, with his extensive and loving observation of child nature, his uninhibited ability to feel one with children, and his deep insight into their potentialities, gave all the weight of his great personality to this, as also to the principle of work, as a potent instrument of education. And yet, schools all over the world and schools by the hundred thousand in our own country,

under the false idea of stuffing the mind with information or the ambitious snobbishness of the isolated development of the intellect, have continued to carry on as if Gandhi and Pestalozzi had never lived. They have done so because they are content with instruction and care nothing for education. They are content with increasing the pupil's efficiency in certain operations and skills and can conveniently ignore what to them seems to be a minor consideration as to what sort of a man he will grow into. The view seems to be implied that if a school has taught someone to write, it is not its concern whether the man who has acquired the skill has been set on the road to be able to write an immortal sonnet or to forge a document to get some shady transaction through. If he has been taught to read, it is a matter of indifference to the school if he is likely to become a reader of the classics or of the gutter press. If he has been properly coached to pass an examination which is neither valid nor reliable, it is none of education's business to ask if he has also been helped to be honest and truthful, socially co-operative and helpful, if he can see any beauty in art and nature, if he can ever persuade himself to subordinate his little selfish ends to the good of the whole, of which he is a part. But education, we have seen, has to do

with what one becomes as well as with what one can do. It is, indeed, concerned with the skills, but even more so with the objectives to which the skills contribute. It should seek to shape the totality of the educand's being. The school, therefore, that aims at the realization of the growing moral and intellectual self can hope to achieve this aim only if it grips at every turn the whole of this growing self, that is, the entire Values-Aims-and-Interests system of the educand. The more and the oftener it can do this, the more effectively will it have a total impact on the pupil's development. In order to render this possible the school, besides being a place of imparting something to pupils, should also be a place of intelligently observing and understanding them. In the training of our teachers for various kinds of school, they should be provided with the technique of such competent observation as will enable them to understand their pupils and direct their educational work on them in the light of this understanding. But no amount of training can help to bring this about as effectively as a normally intelligent, understanding and loving intercourse between teachers and their pupils on the playing field, in excursions, and mutually helpful productive work in and out of a school consciously organized as a community of work and life.

The insight that this will give into the true interests of the pupils can, however, be put to fruitful educational use only if the school in its organization has taken cognizance of the variety of interests as well as the prevalence of certain common interests in a certain age group.

I feel I should end today's talk at this stage, for if I have not quite succeeded in exhausting you already, it is too late to try to do so now. I shall give myself another chance tomorrow.

II

I might be pardoned for starting this talk with two presumptions which betray incurable optimism and wishful thinking. The first of these is that I assume that some of you are risking listening to the second lecture after having listened to the first. My optimism seeks to compete with your tenacity and forbearance. The second and, perhaps, even more drastic presumption is that you would recollect what I was saying last time. I might help you to recall that after having placed before you what I thought education was, I had begun to deal with certain considerations which to me appeared to flow out, as it were, from that concept of education. I had dealt with the three important principles of individuality, of the stage of development of that individuality, and of the indivisible totality which education seeks to form. I had just mentioned the principle of activity and I propose to begin my talk today with a discussion and elucidation of that principle.

In a sense, no school, in any age, has been without some self-activity by the pupil. Even the

most cruel drilling in reading, writing and arithmetic and the most passive storing, in memory, of lumps of information stuffed into one's head by others' grace, had to be accompanied by some self-activity. But it was, at best, an accidental accompaniment of something that was not aimed at or considered of much educational importance. The positive introduction of the principle as an integral part of educational thinking and practice has been due, I think, to the great Swiss educator, Pestalozzi. It has by now received almost universal recognition. But, as you would surely know from daily practice, the acceptance of a principle is quite frequently the worst thing that can happen to it. Enthusiastic supporters make the letter kill the spirit. Clever sceptics, led to acceptance by ulterior considerations, know how to transform it beyond recognition. It is to them the easiest way to sabotage it. 'Keep the name, let the substance alone' is their secret parole. It has happened to many a good principle in our own country. Anyway, this principle of self-activity came into European and American schools in the last century, although the activity was usually kept within reasonably modest proportions in relation to the main business, passive receptivity, which was the schools' sheet-anchor. Even this modest dose was actively imposed from outside. It was not generally recog-

nized that the child, the educand, had an innate urge to understand, to grasp, to do, to accomplish, an urge spontaneously to keep himself engaged in ways prescribed by his own mental make-up. It has been and still is too difficult for the school to concede that education is not a stamping or dressing from the outside, and that all true education is really self-education. But this was what Pestalozzi had really in view. In fact, one of his eminent biographers, Paul Natorp, himself a thinker of eminence, has called his activity principle the principle of spontaneity.

Latterly, however, a reaction has been noticeable and the basically healthy tendency to go from the 'book-school' to the 'work-school' or to the 'school community' has even tended to manifest unwise exaggerations. While I have, for instance, seen basic schools—supposed to have craft-work as the centre of their activity—where there is no semblance of work in any sense of the word, I have also met basic school teachers who told me in all earnestness and with some degree of pride that they did not allow any books in their school, for verily it was a school of activity and work. I trust you will sympathize with me when I confess that I did not think it wise to enquire what kind of work. I have known an eminent German educationist, during

the period of great experimentation in education after the First World War, say of his school that "My girls do everything, the teachers are nowhere in the picture. I demand spontaneous self-activity at all stages in education—in the determination of objectives, in the organization of work, in the supervision of the processes of work, in all questions where any decisions are called for, in the corrections that are required, in the evaluation of the process and its result. I give them freedom in everything." My own feeling is that in these rather heroic moods of exaggeration, one is inclined to forget that the way to real freedom goes over a good deal of the terrain of directed effort. A school totally without direction and authority may prove to be a foolish and, what might be worse, a fruitless venture. No, there is no road to education that spins round and round the self in spite of all the spontaneity in the world; there is none from the potential to the realized human personality that does not pass through society and its goods of culture. Only in gradual and judiciously selective contact with these and in the activity engendered in assimilating them is the individual mind awakened and enabled to discover the law of its being. The nursing and fostering of the creative and the spontaneous in the child has to go hand in hand with breeding

and discipline that past achievements and examples afford.

It occurs to me at this point that I was rather hasty in proceeding to indicate the misunderstanding and exaggeration to which the concept of spontaneous activity might be liable. I should have first made clear what I understand under that term as an educational principle.

Four kinds of activity suggest themselves to me : play activity, sport activity, casual occupational activity, and work activity. Play is an activity which is its own end; it has none outside itself. It is play for the sake of play. It does not aim at producing any *thing* outside the child or any *quality* in the child. It is its own reward. Even when it grows beyond the stage of illusion-play and seems to have some sort of a vague aim, that aim is not to be objectively realized. The imagination of the playing child is not subject to the laws of the object. It can make anything serve as anything : a stick as a horse, a piece of paper as a flower, another as a vase, itself as the teacher, the mother as the pupil and a match-stick as the teacher's rod ! And it works; the child is happy.

Sport, on the other hand, is an activity with an objective, the objective of increased efficiency and facility in certain movements and actions. But sport also does not seek to produce

anything outside itself. Its aim is inherent in it and is signified by the championship or the record as indications of superior efficiency. If sport is engaged in for other objects, as, for instance, for earning money, it becomes a profession, or if for health, it is no longer sport but physical exercise.

As against these two, the other two forms of activity, casual occupation and work, have distinctly definite objectives, outside themselves, to realize; they are never ends in themselves. They aim at the concrete objective realization of some idea. Casual occupations and hobbies have their motive in the result of the concretization as well as in the activity involved. It is not too much or too seriously concerned with the perfect and complete attainment of the aimed at result. It stops when the pleasurableness of the activity ceases, or as soon as the work is about complete in some form or the other. Activity that originates in play and stops at mere casual occupation is the fertile breeding ground of the dilettante. The chief purpose of the educative process is to lead it on to the fourth form of activity, namely work.

I am afraid I shall have to detain you a while with a characterization of work as one of the most important, if not the only, instrument of education. Even 'the most important instru-

ment' might sound to you to betray an exaggerated emphasis. But I hope it will help to forestall and prevent the suspicion that I could indiscriminately regard all work as educative. Work, hard, strenuous, physical work, is the fate of the overwhelming majority of our people, and yet, unfortunately, one could not claim that they were all well educated, although, indeed, some, without acquiring that rather deceitful skill of literacy, are better educated than most of our so-called 'educated'. Yes, all work is not educative, although educative work is the greatest source of real education. This rather paradoxical remark demands that I should elucidate as to what I mean by educative work—work, that is, that helps in the cultivation of the mind and in the shaping of character and personality.

The first thing we should clearly understand in this connection is that manual physical work, accompanied howsoever much by eagerness and interest and exertion, can *not* be educative work if it does not issue forth from a preparatory mental activity, as an essential first conclusive step in that work. It is this essential ingredient of some manual work which helps to make it educative. As the manual activity progresses, the first conclusive intellectual step may be subjected to revision and refinement or change, but it must precede all educative manual work.

Purely mechanical work, isolated from the rest of the worker's mental life, can never be educative. Nor is sheer imitation educative unless it is at least preceded by a comprehension and understanding of what has to be imitated.

Work that is educative has normally four stages: (1) The clear consciousness of the problem, what exactly is to be done; (2) the formation of a plan of work, the choice of appropriate means, thinking out the various steps in which it has to be accomplished; (3) the actual execution of the work, and (4) self-criticism of the result of the work done in the light of No. 1, namely, what exactly has to be done. These have been called the four steps of objectification.

In manual work of an educative nature, only the third step, the actual execution of the work, is manual; the other three consist of mental exertion. In the case of work that is not manual, all the four steps consist principally of mental activity. This mental activity which may accompany a piece of manual work, or the resolving of a moral situation by a definite choice, or the solving of a theoretical problem, has a distinct value in training the mind to tackle similar probelms more easily and with greater confidence when they occur later. They engender a skill in and a development of the process of logical thinking. Although not the whole of education, this is a great step forward towards it. For

the processes of thinking may not be allowed to stay at the level at which they manifest themselves in early childhood. The child, as a child, already begins to bring some kind of an order in the ever-growing mass of its experience. Long before he can speak and avail himself of word-symbols for things and concepts, the processes of comparison, differentiation and identification begin to operate. As soon as he becomes conscious of the ends of his spontaneous activity and becomes aware of the difference between ends and means, he begins not only to feel the need of establishing valid End-Means relationships but also starts seeking to establish the relationship of Cause and Effect, Reality and Appearance, Whole and Part and similar categorical relationships. Whether these empirically established relationships are true, whether the symbols indicating the concepts involved are unequivocal, and other considerations of that nature, do not yet torment the child. His almost incessant volley of questions about what and where, why and wherefore is temporarily stilled by even the most superficial answers. He only insists on having an answer, for that establishes for him the categorical and logical relationship he is seeking. The child attempts to form judgments and combines them in regular conclusions without caring to test if the conclusions are valid and justified. His is a kind of

logical thinking without proper discipline, without having worked to make the process more reliable and trustworthy.

In contrast to this there is the logical process used in mathematics and formal logic. Here thinking deals with propositions which follow necessarily from unequivocal premises—these being either evident or previously proved to be true. Both proceed from evident axioms and operate with unambiguous concepts, with unequivocal symbols to represent them; and the mind does not borrow its concepts from reality but produces them from within itself.

But there is an endless variety of reality facing man which he does not produce from within his mind and which he gradually experiences in his actions and dealings. To make this outside reality serviceable to him, he must probe into it. For this he needs an apparatus of logical thinking which involves, besides the formation of categorical relationships, also the making of valid analytic and synthetic judgments. He needs the habit of objective reflection which implies careful training. The naive and easily satisfied logical processes of the child have to be helped to develop into a careful self-critical and methodical process. For habits of thought will be formed in any case. If habits of careful insight are not developed, then habits of impetuous, superficial

and hasty thinking will form. If the habit of suspending judgment in order to test its truth is not engrained, habits of gullible credulity or suspicious incredulousness will form. To ensure the qualities of care, constancy and thoroughness in thinking, it is necessary to provide opportunities of practising them. The conditions for the exercise of this mental activity can be and are neglected by the intellectual book-schools as well as by the practical work-schools, and any school, whatever emphases are reflected in its programme of work, will not be a place of education unless it provides ample opportunity for this kind of activity, this kind of work.

Schools that see their functions of imparting information and developing skills can, as they much too often, if not invariably, do, neglect to provide this essential mental work as their chief concern. I might shock some of you connected with educational institutions by putting forth more directly the proposition I have already enunciated before, that information and skill are not synonymous with education. I will take that risk, for I mean what I have said. Indeed, information and skill are not even reliable measures of education. In order to make them serviceable as such, we must make a distinction. Information, as you can easily see, can be of

two kinds : it can be knowledge acquired by someone else by his own mental effort and passed on to us as ready-made information, or it can be knowledge acquired by us through our own experience, knowledge that has grown in our mind by its own efforts. Similarly, skill can be of two varieties : it can be mechanical skill attained by imitative diligence capable of repeating existing values, or it can be a non-mechanical skill based on natural disposition creating new values. The first kind of information and skill is addition from the outside; the second kind of knowledge and skill an enrichment and transformation from within. The first represents an external appendage, the second signifies an internal development. The first is instruction, the second is education. The first is superficial polish, the second essential culture. The difference between schools serving the first and those serving the second consists mainly in the convenient absence or the deliberate provision of opportunities for the kind of mental work which, when spontaneously undertaken, develops habits of careful and thorough thinking.

You would remember that when I began the discussion of this fourth principle of education, namely, spontaneous activity, I referred to some exaggerations to which the idea is liable. One of these exaggerations demands spontaneous

activity to be the only kind of activity in the good school and attempts to taboo traditional knowledge and mechanical skill. This, I think, is a thoroughly mistaken exaggeration and ignores the fact that every child is born in a society with a culture. The purposes of spontaneous self-willed work do grip, as it were, one's whole being and themselves supply the urge to acquire a good deal of traditional knowledge and a good deal of mechanical skill if the progress in the pursuit of the spontaneous purposes is not to be disconcertingly slow. Traditional knowledge and mechanical skill will, therefore, always have a place in educational work, but only when they come in to fill the gaps of knowledge acquired, or sought to be acquired, by direct experience, or of skill attained or sought to be attained through creative work. Educative work has to be constantly reinforced by traditional knowledge and mechanical skill.

I wish, to raise at this stage an important and inevitable question about the educative value of work as I have attempted to describe it. The most that I have claimed for it—and it is not a small claim—is that it affords opportunity of mental activity which alone can help to form in the educand the utterly necessary habits of careful, consequent and logical thinking. This is a formal training of some functions of the

mind, it produces a mental, intellectual skill. Can work that produces this result—however important the result—be called educative in the true sense ? I am afraid I cannot answer with a 'yes' to this question. Skills and qualities can be recognized as fruits of true education only if they are acquired and can, therefore, be used in the service of objective values. All the skilled habits of consequent, flawless and logical thinking can be in the possession of someone who has never been gripped by anything outside himself, in the possession of a person who may never have come out of his narrow shell, never been possessed of a great idea, never been fired by a noble cause and never been ennobled by a love. It may be in the possession of someone who can make it subserve effectively even anti-social and criminal purposes. The characteristic mark of an educated man should be a positive attitude towards the goods of culture, that is, towards the ultimate objective values. That attitude should be the cherished product of educational and instructional activity. Kerschensteiner, with whose name you are now familiar, has, in his illuminating study *Begriff der Arbeitschule,* rightly observed that a truly educated man displays five unmistakable signs. I give them here not in translation but in a free paraphrase with a negative tail-end done by me.

1. The educated man has a certain breadth of intellectual horizon with reference to values attached to things and persons. He has no blinkers.

2. He possesses a certain degree of lively open-mindedness and accessibility to new values and ideas. He is no Philistine.

3. He has an inner urge towards moral growth and constantly presses towards perfection, in his own person or in the world around him. He is not conceited and never imagines he has reached the destination.

4. He has a flexible and versatile relation to Value-relationships among things as against the rigorous stiffness of the zealot or the bureaucrat. He is not a hard-boiled egg.

5. His value estimations having been organized round an absolute objective value, he gives clear evidence of a central psychic focus which irradiates all his action, thought and feeling. He is no internally dissipated busy-body.

Kerschensteiner has summed up these qualities in a rather terse definition of education as 'an individually organized sense of values awakened by the goods of culture.' The chief emphasis is, as you would see, on the goods of culture, for it is in them that these objective values are incorporated and kept stored. It is through them the growing mind can experience those values, and the latent energy stored in

goods of culture is transformed into kinetic energy in the subjective mind. Acceptance of and allegiance to these values is 'objectivity', the readiness to subordinate the subjective to the valid objective value. To say it briefly, "all work of the hand or of the mind in which the worker seeks to be objective is educative work." Objectivity, it has been aptly said, is morality; for what else is ethical behaviour but readiness to prefer the objective norms to the subjective inclination and interest ? Objectivity aims only at the perfect realization of values. Objectivity is impersonality.

But how does one come to this objective attitude in one's activity ? How is one put on the road to true education ? You would, perhaps, remember that we had, at an earlier stage in this discussion, distinguished four forms of activity: play, sport, casual occupation and earnest work. In all of them the actor experiences positive or negative values of some kind or the other. All of them tend to develop some function or the other in the actor. But if you have in mind the characterization of these four forms of activity, you will agree with me that of all of them, it is only 'work' that can, in certain circumstances, have educative value. For it is only in earnest work that the worker aims, not at just any result, but at as perfect an attainment as possible of the

result aimed at. Unfinished, careless, slipshod work, whatever else it might be, is surely not educative. Perfect attainment, I said, and Perfection is itself one of the highest formal values. Some work is more suited to bring gradually the experience of this value of perfection than some other work. It is easier, in the case of work whose results lend themselves easily to effective self-criticism by the worker. Technical work, for instance, enjoys this advantage in a very extraordinary degree.

A school that seeks to make work educative can never do too much to provide the most ample opportunities to its pupils of the joyful and stimulating experience of the value of perfection, of bringing something, some task, however small, as near to perfection as possible and not leaving it till that has happened. The urge towards perfection will be initiated in many a case by egocentric and not objective motives. But the experience of achieving something like perfection will, by frequent repetition, most likely succeed in transforming this motive also. The moment this happens, the urge to penetrate into the nature of every means conducive to the attainment of the perfect results becomes almost irresistible. These means consist usually of a variety of the goods of culture, a technical device, maybe, or a foreign language, or a certain branch

of science, or studies in the biography of certain persons, the works of a poet, and so on. The pupil, by his urge to master these means, gets into close touch with them. He now experiences the values which these goods embody. The values that correspond to his own mental configuration awaken, as it were, the corresponding regions of his mind to activity and lead him to the enterprise of realizing some of these values also in his work and again to bring them as near to perfection as he might. For, as we know from our earlier discussion, it is one of the essential qualities of the absolute values that they create an urge for realization and for perfection. Engaged in this exhilerating experience, the original subjective egocentric motivation gets submerged under an unqualified commitment to the various values and to the formal value of perfection with reference to them.

I am afraid I have taken a little too long over this fourth principle that seemed to me to flow out of the concept of education which I stated at the beginning. But the feeling has been growing on me that we who, now for quite two decades, have been flirting with the idea of the work-school as the base of our national educational edifice, owe it to ourselves to think out this particular aspect of education a little more closely to be able to avoid woolly notions and vague concepts leading to ineffective work, and

to be able to deal with the problem with a little more of constancy in thinking and practice. We may, if we give the matter the earnest thought it deserves, agree with the statement with which I started today's discussion, namely, that 'work is the most important instrument of education'; that the educative in work, even manual work, is the mental activity involved which may not be neglected except at the peril of depriving work of all educative quality; that work is educative, for it can be used to develop habits of careful and methodical thinking; that it is educative if it is objective and if it is actuated by the urge to perform it to possible perfection; that its educative function is greatly enhanced by the opportunity of the self-criticism of the result of work, an opportunity which finds its easiest, although by no means its only, fulfilment in manual and technical work.

I might now briefly state and elucidate two other principles which are valid for all education The first of these is the social concern of education. The principles we have so far discussed have kept mainly the individual in view without anything like a full recognition of the individual's relationship to society. It is, no doubt, true that by assuring that the mental and moral

development of the individual mind was to be produced by its association with and assimilation of the cultural goods of the society in which it is placed, we had established 'a silver link, a silken tie' between the individual and his society, but the emphasis so far has, nevertheless, been on the development of the individual mind and the growth of a free moral personality. The principle which we are now considering postulates as an objective of education the steadily growing approach of society to a better and juster and more graceful way of life. The individual mind, we must readily admit, cannot grow to its fullest possibilities without a corresponding advance of the collective social existence. One who aims at excellence in the individual must almost inevitably aim at it and look for it in society. No less a seer than Plato had to examine the whole framework and development of society in his search for individual virtue. The store-house of society in which it keeps, among other uses, for the educative use of its members, the goods of culture created by past human endeavour, depends for its replenishment and its growth on the readiness of its members to protect it, cherish it, cleanse it of decaying and decrepit material, and provide fresher and richer acquisitions for it. If the individual were to confine himself to his

own mental, moral and spiritual growth and to engage in raising the edifice of culture in his own individual being, and chose to be indifferent to what happens to society, how far and how effectively the absolute values are realized in social organization, he might well succeed in perfecting his own spiritual being. But if his example were to be generally accepted, all roads to the culture and education even of the individual will become dark and dreary lanes to a wasteland, and the self-centred, highly spiritual, morally free and autonomous personality will, perhaps, have to perch, high and dry, on some rock in the wasteland contemplating nothing more edifying than the tip of his nose. Opportunities of such isolated but barren moral eminence are available in most societies, even in democratic societies, for societies that are not too hard up can afford the luxury of tolerating or even encouraging and supporting isolated specimens of such sterile excellence. For they, perhaps, realize that even such an isolated good life may, by its sheer being there, serve as an educative force. But they can do so only in exceptional and a very few cases. This is possible for more numerous, although even here rather small, groups in societies that are distinctly and expressly exploitative in nature and in which the leisured few can allow themselves all sorts of

aristocratic self-sufficiencies at the expense of the toiling many. But in a democratic society it is essential that the individual who is obliged, for his nourishment in body, mind and soul, to the co-operation of fellow-citizens should cheerfully share the responsibility of making the life of society a better life, both morally and materially. The allegiance to higher values has to be given not only in individual life; society too has to be helped to own allegiance to them in its organized social existence. And among the potent goods of culture which when experienced and accepted make possible an individually organized system of values, a good and just society, a clean political life, and an honest leadership devoted transparently to the general good are themselves forces of the highest educative value.

This principle of individual and social mutuality is seldom kept in view in the organization of our education. Schools and other institutions of instruction are so utterly engrossed in their enterprise of so-called intellectual advancement that they seem to have no time for such, to them, trivial considerations. In order to educate for social responsibility, these institutions should themselves be organized as units of community living. One learns to swim by swimming in water; one learns to serve by serving

in society. Unless this principle becomes the life-breath of our educational institutions, all other reform will be just patchwork. For how else will the moral value of a sound social organization be experienced except by living as a member of such an organization?

One may hold forth on the virtues of a sound social life, one may go all out to clarify its theoretical foundations, one may teach all the history that there is and all the civics one might improvise, but one cannot hope to enable the student to experience the life-giving and energizing quality of being the member of a good and just society with anything like the vividness which is required to awaken the urgent moral challenge of serving it in order to preserve its present excellence and to improve its future quality. Experienced in a good home, in a good school community, in a social group of like-minded persons, it can become a lifelong commitment for the service of the town, the state, the nation and even mankind. School communities based on common values and common cultural goods, like the public schools of England, a fair number of experimental schools and school communities in Europe, the U.S.A. and Palestine and the plan to establish a very considerable number of such communities in the Soviet Republics in the near future, are

indications of progressive educational thinking in diverse environments and naturally with different values and objectives in view. Feeble indications, indeed, like a still, small voice claiming feebly to be heard in the din of the millions of instructional factories! But the view seems, all the same, to be gaining ground that real experience of social living in a school community is essential for education in social responsibility and for using it even as a means of social betterment. It may be crying for the moon to wish to have residential school communities for all children anywhere. But I trust human ingenuity to devise ways and means for organizing its schools as communities of work and shared objectives without necessarily having to make them boarding schools. I seem to feel that this will happen first—and that, perhaps, soon—in the totalitarian countries, and, as in many other things, the democracies will realize a little later what they have missed and what may be even more urgently needed for the preservation of their way of life than for the others. The others can enforce service of the whole; democracies have to wait on the natural awakening of the sense of social responsibility and the urge to be instrumental in making a better society by providing for the actual energizing experience of the mutually creative relationship of individual and society. It can do so unsystematically

in its families, which its industrial developments are rapidly undermining, and it can do so systematically in school communities which it should set out to establish with a sense of urgency that can come from the clear recognition of the fact that its future as a way of life is being made or marred in its schools.

Now, towards the end of today's talk I would like to place before you for consideration a last question which the nature of education as we have sought to envisage it makes it imperative to clarify. That is the question of Freedom and Authority in education. It assumes added importance in a democratic society which, if it is true to itself, respects individuality, considers the human person to be an end and not merely a means, and seeks to educate the individual mind by the nursing and development of its specific Values-Ends-Interests system through the agency of the goods of culture to the goal of a morally free personality. The stress on individuality and the exclusive recognition of the possibility of the individual's development only on the basis of his specific life-form would seem to indicate that throughout the organization of education in a democracy, unchecked freedom shall prevail to the entire exclusion of authority. Such a notion is not only a theoretical conjecture, it has been seriously advocated as a view of

education as 'providing opportunities for full growth and the removal of hampering influences'. A whole educational philosophy of 'Wachsenlassen' or 'Let Grow' has grown.

Since we in this sheltered country of ours are not very much addicted to systematic thinking out of our problems—for the reassuring remembrance of the unforgettable fact that our ancestors had thought and meditated, and the complacent consciousness that even now someone somewhere undertakes that tiring labour for us, gives us a blissful feeling of comfortable cosiness—and we are not particularly tormented by the consideration of fundamental problems specially in the field of education, it may seem that this discussion has no reality for us. I am afraid I don't agree with that escapist view. We will have to come to grips with the problem sooner or later; sooner, indeed, than later. The conflict is on and nothing but a proper understanding of its nature will help to solve it. The long traditions of intellectual authority, uncritical acceptance, unquestioning conformity reinforced, if anything, by the prevailing concepts of education as the imparting and acquiring of ready-made information—symbolized in the almost religious attachment to the scriptures known as 'Examination Notes'—and training in mechanically acquired skills, and the widely

prevalent fear of spoiling the child by sparing the rod and the over-powering urge to save him by its fulsome use—all these seem to imply that authority is the basic principle prevading our educational activity to the exclusion of freedom. There is, however, the other side of the medal too. The licence that students are allowing themselves in what they do and in what they leave undone, the uncontrolled obsessions, distractions and dissipations of which they give frequent evidence in their behaviour, viewed against the pathetic apathy, indifference or complacency of the teachers; the angry young men and even the angrier younger ones on the one hand, and the unconcerned, blissfully detached or dejected and defeated teachers (when they themselves are not classified as the 'angry young men') on the other—all seem to indicate that in this free land of ours education subscribes much too totally to the principle of 'Wachsenlassen' or 'Letting Grow'—well, if we cannot let them grow to bring forth flower and fruit, just let them grow into weeds.

In this confused situation we may not hope to organize any fruitful system of national education. I can here only briefly state my view on the matter. Freedom and Authority in education are, in my view no contrasting opposites. For there is no authority in education without the inner freedom which recognizes

it, and there is no freedom without regulation and orderliness which is felt as authoritative. If authority signified forced compulsion and freedom stood for just licence and arbitrariness, they would, indeed, be contrasting opposites. But there is no community—be it a family, a school, a state—which, however much it prized freedom, had no rules and regulations that were recognized by the constituent members as binding and therefore authoritative. There is no autonomous personality conceivable without principles which could keep the animal instincts and urges in check to enable the human mind to go about its higher business in freedom. Without such regulative principles, society would be a chaotic jumble, personality a slave to animal desires and appetites.

A person left to himself from childhood without direction may conceivably come to such regulative principles on his own; the universality of the laws of the mind does not, perhaps, quite exclude that possibility; but he will come to them by a very very long and a very very hard road, indeed, and there might not be enough time left for him to put the discovery to much use. The individual is helped by society to go through a stage of outside authority before it reaches that of true self-determination. The road to freedom is made by authority. To cut out authority

altogether would be to cut out that road. The real question that concerns education is really not one of either-or, it is the problem of determining how long external guidance and authority is essential to reach the agreed end of self-determination. How long might authority last, how soon shall freedom take over—for take over it must, if the development of a morally free personality is the end. There is an authority at the beginning of education and an authority at the end. The authority at the beginning is the authority of age and experience, of affectionate guiding and sympathetic guidance, unfortunately with some possible unpalatable sanctions attached to superior strength, which a good school does everything to keep in the background. At the end is the authority of values freely experienced and freely accepted in the personal and impersonal goods of culture. A general acceptance at a fairly early stage of the need of orderly and smooth working of the educational activity and of the need of subordination and integration in the educational organization should not be difficult to achieve provided the matter is not left to chance. An insight into and a reverence for the values education stands for and the values the teachers might represent may appear difficult to engender, but till that has been done, one should at least know that education is not

happening. The business and the privilege of the educator and of the school or college as an educative community is to guide and help and direct the young in their charge in such a way as to develop in them a sense of responsibility for their actions and their omissions and to awaken in them an irrepressible urge towards self-education and, to the extent they succeed in these, to give them the fullest measure of freedom and self-determination commensurate with such success. Easily said, but hard work for generations of good teachers. I hope and trust they will be forthcoming.

III

In the two previous talks of this series I attempted to lay before you my concept of what education in the sense of cultivation of the individual mind to its possible perfection signified and to indicate and explain briefly the six principles which should be observed in all educational planning. They were principles which seemed to me to hold true of all education as they, so I maintained, flowed out of the very essence of the educational process. But all education is not education for all; all education is not organized by politically organized society, the State; the expenditure of resources on all education is not shared by all its citizens. 'All education' is a comprehensive category and would include many educational activities and many educational institutions which may be intended only for particular persons or groups of persons in a society. Mankind have had education of some sort throughout their history, but except as in the early tribal stage of their life when education was synonymous with living and was not assigned to a special separate agency, education has, I guess, seldom been for all. It has been for the few—

the few that had leisure, the few that had wealth, the few that ruled, or, with the introduction into life of the religious ideas of human brotherhood, also the few who chose to devote themselves to the rather extraordinary activity of storing their minds with knowledge and were supported in that enterprise by the material assistance of those who had resources to spare. The problem those ages had to tackle was the problem of educating a class of individuals, never by any means too large in a community, the ruling class, the professional class or the class of those who did not have to work for their living. The problem was usually handled by the class for itself and not by the community as a whole. The problem of the modern State is one of educating all its citizens to a sense of nationhood and to enable them to fill a place worthily in it. It is the radically changed circumstances of modern times, the growing complexity of social organization and industrial life, the pressing urgency of creating new social organs to ensure the unity and efficiency of the people that have caused this new and, in all conscience, stupendous task of education for everybody, education for all the children of all the people, and not only children at that. No wonder that the State's providing education for all children and requiring them to take it has

not a very long history. Introduced first, perhaps, in Germany, it has even there a history of just about 250 years. In the United States of America compulsory school attendance laws are only, in some states, just a little over 100 years old. In most other lands it has even a briefer history. It may interest you to know that during the last three decades of the 19th century, when the States of the American Union were going through the process of passing compulsory education laws, opponents of the legislation succeeded in convincing certain classes that compulsory education laws were not only 'Prussian in origin' but were 'instruments of despotism' that should have no place in the Statute Book of a free government.

I myself had the personal experience of having a long discussion with a distinguished Director of Education on a committee set up to consider the scheme of universal free and compulsory basic education in the late thirties. "Why universal and why compulsory?" came the rather abrupt and angry question. And before I and some of my colleagues could recover from the initial shock, he chided us with a ring of righteous indignation : "These men propose to begin with compulsion for all in a country looking forward to be free!" I argued at length with him in an unequal contest, unequal for me for

he was much cleverer than I, unequal for him as he was in a committee that did not see his way. I remember that the Director, an able scholar, a concientious administrator and a patriot to the bone, remained an unconvinced, sullen, solitary protestant to the end. Many in his generation and in his class of highly educated intellectuals could not easily reconcile themselves to this rather new-fangled business of the education of all the children of all the people. Literacy, perhaps yes, but education for all was not acceptable without serious doubts and questionings. But one does not have to argue long with you, I trust, to establish that the social, political and economic changes that have happened in recent decades, that are happening with accelerated speed before our very eyes and promise to happen even faster in the immediate future, leave no choice but for the State to recognize the right of every citizen to at least a certain minimum of education and his duty to take it. Specially in the particular situation of our country, which is striving to build up a structure of democratic living in a secular Welfare State, the need for this education for all is absolutely essential. For a democratic society does not only have to work for the realization of ideas and plans prescribed by others, but each one of its citizens has to contribute as 'a fraction of the national arbiter' in

the framing of the design of national life. A democracy, I need not remind you, has to rely on individual initiative and not on direction from above. Its discipline is self-discipline and not an imposed discipline. Co-operation, persuasion and exercise of disciplined initiative depend on mutual understanding and large-hearted toleration, which are essential conditions of democracy. One of its most difficult tasks is that of educating every citizen to the sense of a common national ethos. It is a problem which a democratic society, by the choice of the basic principles of the constitution, by the choice of its distinctive way of life, cannot escape. For the very choice of those basic principles generates centrifugal forces which may easily tend to disintegrate and disrupt democracy as a social order. The democratic State has to do something to keep itself together. The most potent instrument it has for this purpose is education. We should, however, remember that the purposes of a State can be shortsighted or farsighted, that it can be obsessed with the immediate or be mindful of the ultimate, it can aim at the growth of moral freedom or aim at its destruction.

If the aims of the public education system are to be determined by an absolute all-powerful, tyrannical State that introduces compulsory

education for all its citizens within a certain age-range and prescribes for them their schooling as it prescribes for them their life, then we cannot get from the aims and purposes it sets for its schools anything that can be helpful in the understanding of their true educational significance. No imposed pattern arbitrarily stamped on a living moral being, however efficient by certain standards, can be education as we have defined it. If, however, the State modestly and quite rightly regards itself as an evolutionary stage towards the perfect moral State, whose constant endeavour it is to pave the way to the development of a free moral personality for its citizens, and through their maximal individual development and their active and willing co-operation, itself to grow into the true and just constitutional State, then the State can legitimately set the aims for its schools.

A State that incorporates the moral ideal is itself the highest moral entity. For it is then the condition precedent for the individual citizen being able to realize his goal of becoming a fully developed free moral personality. The citizen and the State become mutually fructifying. By endeavouring to make the State approach its moral ideal, the citizen avails himself of the best opportunity to achieve his own perfection. I know that this is not true of all manifestations of the

idea of the State. Some are positive and powerful hindrances to the attainment of the goal of a free moral personality. The State then tends to become the Absolute Evil, as, indeed, some great minds have characterized it. But one may not lose hope in the destiny of mankind by refusing to believe in the possibility of their organizing a system of social and political living together that would partake of the ideal of the just and impartial, the good and benevolent State. To educate a person as a true citizen is to make him the instrument of helping his State to become the realization of the ethical ideal of the Just State. It will be no true education to harden the citizen into habits and ways of thinking and doing and reacting that would render the present imperfect State indifferent or hostile to its own evolutionary growth and satisfied with its present defects, consuming in the process of living all the good elements in its constitution and leaving behind but a dark and dismal precipitate of the Absolute Evil, in which the roots of nothing good can find their nourishment.

A good State, mindful of its moral destiny, has two kinds of aims before it : (1) the egoistic aim of peace and security inside, defence against aggression to assure its continued existence, and care of the physical and moral well-being of its citizens; and (2) the establishment

of the One Human World or the Federation of Mankind by itself growing morally to be an effective instrument of bringing it about in co-operation with like-minded peoples. If this good State takes over the education of all the children of all its citizens, it can be justly expected to educate them to contribute, each according to his natural individual capacity, towards the attainment of these ends. Why else should it take the responsibility of educating all boys and girls, and why else may it require all boys and girls to receive this education? The State educates to get good and useful citizens fit to pursue its two-fold purpose. It educates with a utilitarian and an ethical motive.

Keeping the two-fold objective of the State in view, one could say that the compulsory public school will have the following objectives: (1) the first thing it will aim at will be to educate the citizen for some useful work, for a definite function in society commensurate with his capacity and aptitude. Its first aim is vocational or professional education or as thorough a preparation for it as possible within the age limitations prescribed for compulsion. This is a utilitarian objective, but is also the basis of the moral and educational work of the school.

(2) The second aim will be to make of vocational education a moral experience and to bring home to the educand as vividly as possible that

a vocation is not only a source of earning a living but is, indeed, an office of public service in an organized co-operative community and should be placed in the service of the growth and development of a moral social order.

(3) The third aim of the compulsory public school will be to awaken in the growing member of society the desire, and to develop in him the strength, to make a start on the long and enchanting journey of building up his own moral personality and to apply it to the moral perfection of the society to which he belongs. It will make him realize that the cherished ideal of the morally perfect society can advance towards its realization only by the harmonious working together of morally free persons.

Let us now straightaway get to the schools we should set up to achieve these three objective How can the school serve the first function of equipping its pupils for their station in life ? If society is simply organized as society was in the Switzerland of Pestalozzi's day or like the rural village society that almost exclusively engaged Gandhiji's thinking, the school could do a great deal to prepare its pupils for their vocation. The onrush of industrial development in the country makes the task more complicated. But we should not let that complication mislead us. No school, perhaps, can in a period of seven or eight years, which, at the moment, is the only possibility we

might consider, give all the requisite training for the professional life of its pupils. It should, then, be in a position to give them as much preparatory skill in mental and manual operations as would be required for their filling in their place in society efficiently and well. By far the first of those who will go out of these schools will have to fill a place where manual work is the predominant activity.

A theoretical book school will, as is now too patently known, not be the school to fit this vast majority of our boys and girls for their station in life. The school meant for them should be a school where manual work is the chief instrument of educative activity. For those who have to fill the comparatively smaller number of intellectual occupations one could suggest a different focus for the schools. But beyond the presumptuous belief of intellectuals that their progeny must also necessarily be intellectual, there is no easy method of sorting out this variety from the great mass of children who show quite unmistakably their active practical proclivities.

The school, therefore, that we set out to establish will have to be a school of work, mental or manual, and, till such time as the pure breed of theoretical intellectuals can be reliably sorted out at that age, a school where manual work shall be the centre of educational activity. I have, I hope, clearly enunciated in my second

lecture that mental work is an essential and a most important part of educative manual activity. This school of manual work can, therefore, serve as an effective base of education for vocations of both the manual and the intellectual type. When properly organized it would be a good school both for the rural and the urban population, both for agricultural and industrial occupations, both for subsequent manual or intellectual fields of activity. It will have equipped its pupils, as they go out of it, with habits of work, of logical thinking out of their work projects in numerous problem-solving activities, of carefully reflecting on the possible means of doing their work, of doing the work undertaken with the best possible care, of exercise in subordinating their subjective whim to the logic of the object, of expressing the joy of aiming at and achieving a degree of perfection, and finally of learning the sure way to better success by the self-criticism of their achievements. This is, perhaps, more than most of us have managed to get from a much longer schooling than what we propose to require of and provide for our children in a school of work. I have no doubt in my mind that a properly organized school of work will deliver the goods. That the work schools we have so far established may not in general have achieved these results is only an

indication that our generation has not been educated through the agency of work!

The first objective of the required public education can, as I hope I have made quite clear, be attained by making educative manual work the main feature of that education. The second objective, namely the making of education a moral experience and a moral training, bringing home to the pupil the realization that the vocation one takes up is not merely a device for earning a livelihood but really an office of public service in a co-operative community based on the division of labour, can be achieved, I submit, only by organizing our schools as communities of work and life. This community should stand out as the embodiment of moral ideals suited to the age of its members. This community of work can stand for a noble-minded comradeship; in the active finding out of the unknown and in the discovery of truth, natural and historical; in the appreciating and creation of beauty; in upholding standards of a clean life; in helping the helpless; in courageously speaking out one's mind; in accepting the duty of the best possible in accomplishing the tasks assigned; in the readiness to work for and to stand back, if necessary, for the good of the school-community, to play for the team and a number of other ideals can consciously form the basis of

such a community. Work in such a community becomes service and builds up what is expressed by that carelessly bandied word, character.

In the busy atmosphere of the community of work with its varied and manifold fruitful contacts a certain social sensibility and a certain delicacy of feeling will be developed which are extremely valuable ingredients in the formation, again, of that character. Another quality, that of responsibility, will find a fertile field of growth in this community.

Children who have experienced the unspeakable joy and the rewarding satisfaction of having worked in such a set-up are bound to seek and find it in the work of later life. Experiments all over the world are being made to create such school communities. We shall have to do it if we take our education seriously. But we shall have to devise ways and means of doing this not in the case only of rather expensive public schools, but in our schools of all the children of all the people. Our best educators should apply their minds to converting the compulsory Indian school into a real community of work.

The third aim, that of initiating the process of self-education, of awakening in the pupil the desire, with a degree of urgency, to grow into a free moral person and to help in making the society to which he belongs a morally better

society, can, at best, be started at the compulsory school in view of the stage of development of the child. To let the pupil go out of school before, say, 14 is to give the school no chance at all to do this.

The chief organizational question about this free and required education with the objectives and method set out already is, who amongst the total population of the country should be selected for this?

If we keep the three objectives in view, the lowest age group of children up to seven years is obviously not to be selected. It represents the age of play, and play, as I have shown, is its own end and may not be put to use for the attainment, in any appreciable degree, of any of the three objectives.

Could we select mature people, say, at the age of 21, to go to the nation's institutions of required education for some time? It would, indeed, not be as strange as it might at first sound. The needs of economic life will, however, come in the way, although some kind of an organization of required work under intelligent educative supervision in labour camps, for instance, might, indeed, do us a great deal of good. People would at least understand a little what they so endlessly prattle about. Provisions of this kind of labour or military service are used

in many lands as effective reinforcement of the school in educating for intelligent citizenship and a disciplined national life. But our average of life being as low as it is, most of our countrymen might be deprived of this essential required education if we began too late and may not have enough time left to them to put it to much use for the people !

So we shall have to consider the two lower age groups—14-21 and 7-14, both of which show certain characteristics generally true of the population in each group. The age period 14-21 might, indeed, be better for attaining the second and third objectives for which this required education, we said, was to be designed. It might even be more effective from the point of view of the first objective. But it would suffer from three serious drawbacks. It would take away from work members of society who would be very valuable for production; it might involve a newly-married wife and a small baby; and, what is educationally most important, it would begin their education too late to take advantage of the eminently practical urges of childhood for training in the work of life and would involve the additional complication for educational organization of a very diversified manifestation of interests in hetero-centric work in the various individualities.

The period of 7—14 seems to be the obvious tentative choice. But it might be said at the very outset that this required education should go upto 14 in any case. If the supporters of the view that the earliest years of life are the most important must be heard, and you must, you think try to please them, then you might begin as early as would satisfy them, at birth if they shout loud enough, at six as we seem already to have agreed to do. If you begin at birth, please remember that you must plan for a minimum of 14 years of education; if you begin at six, then for eight years, as, it appears, is the national consensus. From what I regard as the *raison d' etre* of the required public schooling, it is, in my view, much more important to continue till a later than to begin at an earlier date. I am quite clear in my mind that if we plan to provide an eight year period of compulsory education, then the eight years from 7 to 15 would yield much better results than those from 6 to 14. But whenever you begin, to finish it earlier than 14 will be fatal to the purposes which justify any compulsory education in a free society.

It is good to keep ourselves reminded of even inconvenient commitments. You would know that it is a directive of the Indian Constitution that education to all boys and girls up to the age of 14 will be required and provided free

within ten years of the promulgation of the Constitution. The directive has wisely and far-sightedly omitted to mention the age at which the required education should begin. It has, however, expressly indicated the age up to which it shall be given and received. You know that we are nowhere near fulfilling that directive. Not even a distant prospect of its fulfilment is in sight. One is told that there are not resources enough for fulfilling it. I do not wish to quarrel with that view at the moment, but I do not subscribe to it either. Resources have been found and will continue to be found for many a thing for which there is no constitutional directive. To plan in a democracy is to plan in accord with the will of the people. The will of the people finds its most conclusive and clear expression in the Constitution they give themselves. It must, indeed, be a matter of serious heart-searching for anybody to plan to spend the resources of the people on anything at the cost of failing to comply with a directive in the Constitution. But, as I said before, I do not propose to quarrel with the view that resources were not available. Conceded resources could not, for pressing reasons, be made available and the whole age span 6-14 or 7-14 could not be covered, it is beyond me to understand why it should have been changed to 6-11 and not 9-14. Look at the compulsory

attendance laws of countries who take their education seriously. You would hardly find any that sends out its young from its compulsory free schools before the age of 14. There is a tendency to raise that age limit. In some it has already been raised to 15, 16 and even 18 ! You would find several who begin late, mostly at seven, quite a few at eight and some even at nine. Nothing but a mechanical view of reducing by cutting the top, or the persistent obsession about the importance of the earlier years, as if any years in life were in some way or the other important, or an indifference to specific aims and objectives of the compulsory education for all, could have been responsible for this change. If resources are available only to provide free compulsory education over five years, I am quite definitely of the view that the five years should be from 9 to 14.

I feel I must speak out about our efforts so far to establish in our country schools of work, known as Basic Schools. My remarks will be based on my fairly extensive observations and on the impressions they have left on my mind. They are not the result of any systematic objective study. They do not cover the whole of India. But having some idea as to what a Basic School might aspire to and reasonably hope to achieve, and having seen a fairly large number

of stray samples, I venture to share with you my feeling that we have, by and large, not achieved what might have been easily attainable in properly organized Work Schools. There are many reasons, most of an organizational nature, but there is one very important educational reason, and that is that in these schools we have, generally not kept in view the essential educative conditions of work, as I attempted to describe them at the last lecture. Just as we can turn a so-called intellectual book-school into a mechanical memory training school, as we have, God bless us, succeeded in doing in hundreds of thousands of schools without a dog barking and without yet preventing their number from jumping up higher and higher, so we can, as we have in quite a few cases, succeed in making of our Work School, the Basic School, a place of mechanical work. The work is extraneously and uniformly prescribed, there is no semblance of a spontaneous motivation in the child, he is supremely ignorant of any personal or social purpose behind his work. He starts with no interest except, perhaps, curiosity and the appeal of doing something with his hands. He carries on as he is told to. He begins with no problem he has to solve. He naturally does not get any opportunity of thinking out his problems, for he, indeed, has none. He does not have to think

out any possible alternative methods of solving the non-existent problem. He is told to do it in a certain prescribed way and is denied even the simulated joy of a joint discovery with the teacher. He is occasionally made to work—usually not regularly—and those who make him do so are usually satisfied with any result. You would remember that this is the characteristic of casual occupation and, as I suggested, it is the business of education to pave the way to its transformation into earnest work which insists on the best possible result, and ever better result, till perfection is reached. As a matter of fact the teachers themselves not infrequently show any interest in the result on the day the Inspector or a VIP visits the school. The teachers know how to classify these visitors, they know who considers Basic Education to be a fad and who still takes it a little more seriously. They don't show any work to the first variety, but arrange a meeting where the visitor is garlanded, a welcome song is sung, followed by a report and a *Bhashan by* the distinguished visitor, almost imperceptibly over to a tea. The *Basic-Education-wallah* has, of course, to be shown some work, and that is duly done. One finds *taklies* and *charkhas* plying, with suspiciously fat windings of fairly good yarn already on the *taklie* or the spindle fre-

quently in the hands of pupils whose yarn is thick and uneven and breaks all the time you stand by them. It is the casual result of occasional activity being superimposed on the comparatively better results of a few boys or teachers who know to spin well! If the teacher senses that the visitor will be more impressed with the quantity of previous output than with the doubtful quality of the present result—and some of the clever teachers develop almost an electronic sensitivity in this behalf owing to the much too frequent visits of V.I.P.s who usually don't have much else to do—he shows him a respectable heap on a table in the corner covered with a rather dirty piece of fine foreign cloth. If the visitor is curious or just wishes to show an intelligent interest and has no obsessive dirt-phobia, he, perhaps, lifts that conjuror's cloth and finds underneath it a tortuous, suffering, disintegrating, untwisting, dust-covered jumble of what, perhaps, once was some kind of earth-wormish cotton yarn, passing, it would appear, in purgatory to get back to its original sinless cosy state of being just a short staple cotton filament. These innocent filaments were taken away—so the filament would, I guess, think—taken away from their blissful softness vainly, aimlessly, almost maliciously by the boys and girls in the school under orders from their teachers! And

just why? These filaments would have been happy if, after all the carding and the breaking and the twisting and the winding and the unwinding, they had reached their destiny of becoming cloth to cover a naked back. That would have given the children's work a significance. The work as it was organized missed the one as much as the other.

Work which is mechanical, work in which no mental exertion is involved, work in which one is satisfied with just any result and there is no constantly prodding urge to aim at its possible perfection, work in which there is no self-criticism and so no real progress is in no sense educative. Schools that have such work are not Work Schools in any sense.

There are other organizational difficulties. Let me mention just two. The Basic schools are not infrequently treated as unwelcome intrusions in the placid atmosphere of Indian education. Boys and girls going out of the Basic schools find it difficult, in some cases impossible, to get into other higher schools. So Post-Basic schools are established for their benefit—just a few and far between. Then when a boy finishes his Post-Basic school he is not, after having finished 12 years of schooling in a Government-sponsored school of a type which it is proclaimed is to be the future pattern of all elementary and partly

secondary education, able to go to a university, for universities cannot be asked by Government to admit him. The universities, verily, are autonomous bodies! I am myself very jealous of the real autonomy of the universities. But I still wait to see a university refusing to admit boys and girls who are sent out in their hundred thousand every year by the Boards of Secondary and Intermediate Education with their stamp, although, according to responsible university men themselves, they are not fit by any standard to profit by the education which the universities, as at present doing their work, can give. They timely admit them, for, verily, they are autonomous bodies. But the boy from the Post-Basic school with one or in some cases two years more of total previous schooling is denied that privilege. This shows lamentable lack of co-ordination in educational work, and something must, indeed, be done soon about it.

If many of the Basic schools are even now considerably better places of education than other schools dealing with the corresponding age-group of children, it is because their relationship with the surrounding life is less remote and they tend to be organized as small educational communities with some common values. Their practical work, whatever its educational shortcomings, is closer to their distinctive mental

make-up in that period and so the schools manage to develop some positive qualities. But we should not be satisfied until we have made them real places of education through educative work. To do this implies a firm decision and an unmistakable will to follow it up to its perfection. Educational work in this should do its best to be like educative work. I wish in our educational work we had always before us the motto—also a very appropriate motto for a school of work—Thinking and Doing, Doing and Thinking. Is it really not a pity that even today, after nearly two decades of the introduction of the idea of Basic Education to Indian educational thinking by no less a man than Gandhiji, there are important persons in the field of public education and public life, both amongst those who make policy and those who are responsible for its execution, who, by what they say or leave unsaid, not in conferences but in effective private asides, create a doubt whether we really want these schools of work? Something should be done to put an end to this also if progress in Basic Education is not to be as slow, as uneven and as educationally ineffective as I fear it has been.

If the view prevails that this type of school is nothing for us, if the scheme is not sound or not feasible, by all means declare so and be done with it. That would be a more honest course to take. And I am sure if that is done, the School

of Work will return to Indian education with enhanced vigour and be implemented more wholeheartedly and more thoroughly, and that perhaps soon. The greater danger to the School of Work is the acceptance of the idea with a hundred mental reservations and of discrediting it by a thoughtless, inefficient practice.

Seven or eight years of Basic Education is, in my view, the minimum that has to be provided, and if it must be reduced, let us reduce it at the lower limit. But, as I said, education up to 14 is the minimum for the attainment in some measure of the objectives of compulsory education. More is very urgently necessary. Countries which take their education seriously are alive to the fact that even a compulsory education period of nearly eight years ending with the age of 14 is by no means sufficient to enable the young citizen to be effective in his vocation and in fulfilling his obligations as a citizen unless his education is continued further without taking him away altogether from his work. The gradual decline in these countries of the supervised apprenticeship and a clear realization of the community's responsibility to provide education and guidance to young wage-earning citizens whose limited schooling is evidently an inadequate preparation for effective citizenship and whose entrance into the vortex of life coin-

cides with the difficult period of adolescence has led them to this conclusion. Some thirty countries provide continuation education of some kind, and since my information is not up-to-date, the number might well be larger. India is not one of them. The Germans have been at it quite a long time. Their Fortbildungschulen, or Berufsschulen, as they were later called, became real places of education, thanks to the work of Georg Kerschensteiner in Munich. His example was followed by many countries in Europe and by many States in the American Union. Originally provided for young people employed in manufacturing and commerce, they are being extended to those in agriculture, in mining and in domestic service. Usually started as evening classes, they now usually insist on day-time attendance for a certain number of hours every week, the time spent at the continuation school being considered as time spent in work.

There is much that needs to be done in Indian education. But first things must come first. There is some education which is meant for all children. The State must first see to it that this obligation is really met. At least a seven year compulsory school of work organized as a community with the threefold objectives I have indicated, transformed from a place of theoretical one-sidedness to that of practical human

many-sidedness, from a place of passive book learning to one of active, purposeful work—work seriously planned, honestly executed, unsparingly criticized and generously appreciated, supplemented after the age of 14 by continuation vocational institutes with compulsory part-time attendance up to the 18th year of age will have laid the foundation not only of sound education but also of sound and dynamic democratic society.

It is work that the State naturally will take in hand. But its success will depend in a large measure on the teacher and on the Indian citizen.

I should not be surprised if there be some teachers among my audience today. I am afraid, however, that there will not be many elementary or Basic school teachers. They don't usually come to the Vigyan Bhavan. Thanks to the All India Radio, my words will, I hope, reach a number of teachers outside this hall, but again not many elementary or Basic school teachers. They don't usually listen to English broadcasts. But having been a teacher most of my life and having had, by a strange constellation of circumstances, something to do with all stages of educational activity from the kindergarten, through the Basic and secondary schools to the university, I have developed a sense of the oneness of the educational profes-

sion, which our caste-ridden society unfortunately tends to break up into watertight compartments. If, by some magic, I could create among those engaged in educational work that sense of oneness of a most intricately interconnected activity, I would not have lived in vain. But one must face the dismal prospect—for where shall that magic come from?

I wish, however, to address a few words to fellow-teachers here and through them to all the others spread over our vast land. There is nothing new that I can tell them. I have been saying that to teacher audiences all these 30 years and more. I wish to remind them of their immense responsibility towards a people engaged in the task of erecting an edifice of national greatness on the foundations of its hard-won freedom. Let them remember as educated persons who, as free moral personalities, ought to be concerned about the moral improvement of the society for which they work, that they are custodians of the highest values created and cherished by our people—themselves representing a fascinating composition of most of what is best in the cultures of mankind. If some of them have never experienced the blissful pain of having been stirred to the depths of their being by some of these values, their place, indeed, is not among the ranks of the teachers. He who has never been

so stirred, he who has never experienced any of the higher values to the degree of being almost possessed by them at least momentarily, he who has been cold and holds out the depressing prospect of remaining cold with reference to any values beyond his poor little physical self, should really not think of becoming or remaining a teacher. A teacher has to help in the transmitting of higher values to his pupils, through his personality and through the goods of culture which are his instruments. If he himself does not know them, has not experienced them, has never once heard their persistent call for realization, how can he transmit or enkindle them? A good teacher has besides this to be a character of what I have described as the social type in my first lecture. The essence of his work is the attempt to get values realized in other young persons as a result of sympathy for and understanding of the needs and gifts of these persons. His chief preoccupation is with immature growing lives, with personality, as it were, in the bud. He is to be guided, in the influence he brings to bear on him, by the characteristics of his ward. He has to help the bud into full bloom and not to make paper flowers to satisfy his whim. The growth of the morally autonomous personality is the aim and end of his endeavour. He may never use the

cultural goods which are the tools of his work as impositions to make a slavish copy, a cliche. The true teacher yearns to lead his pupils on to their inner moral freedom which should enable them to work for the moral improvement of the ever incomplete society to which they and he belong, and to work for this end—which a good democratic society should always concede —even when he has to do so at the risk of being stoned to death by that society for performing this inescapable moral duty. Socrates and Christ and Husain and Gandhi should not have lived and died in vain for him. The teacher's is not to dictate or dominate; his is to help and serve, to understand and shape in Faith and Love and Reverence. It calls forth all his limitless love and his inexhaustible patience to produce the proper adjustment between the individual and the group. The significance of each, as you know, has been exaggerated in turn. It is the teacher's to harmonize them. While others dogmatize, the teacher knows. He knows that the individual is not just a unit of calculation, an identity card or a number. If the young he has to help grow through work and knowledge and experience are not asking for a fuller and more satisfying life, each in his or her own specific way, then life itself might, perhaps, be a fiction. On the other hand, he

also knows that the group is not a mere aggregation of individuals or just a hypothesis convenient for purposes of organization. He knows that the individual comprehends life and gets the strength to change it through the group. But he knows also how easily the idea of the group can degenerate into an instrument of suppression. There is just some difference between the rhythmic march of happy, nimble feet and the ominous tramp of an invading army. To the teacher it is this difference that seems to matter and he feels that, given the chance, he should help men to grow who will walk together with joy and work together with unflagging zeal for ends beyond themselves.

Fellow-teachers (for, guess, I have not forfeited the right to address you thus. However much appearances might have changed, I do sincerely feel I belong to the fraternity. The sense of having served it and of identity with what I believe is its mission gives me the strength to carry on yet awhile)—fellow-teachers : It is a tremendous challenge we have to face. Let us face it bravely. Let us not always wait till others think out things for us and we set out mechanically, soullessly, to execute them. Let us evolve a healthy professional opinion, a high professional sense of national duty. We are not

just wage-earners, making some sort of a living, as is the cruel fate of millions upon millions of our countrymen, by doing what we do not understand, by engaging in exhausting toil on work that has no significance for us, that gives our lives no meaning. We have to breathe the spirit of the intellect, of objective morality and social responsibility into the work of the hand and to give to intellectual work a firm foundation of concrete, purposeful activity.

I wish in the end to say a few words to my fellow-citizens on behalf of the Indian schools. Friends, I beg of you to give to our schools their rightful setting. The school does not exist in a vacuum. It is an integral and sensitive part of society. The school looks for example in the life of the society around and takes after it. I, therefore, ask for a spirit of general helpfulness and co-operation amongst you in all the enterprises of life such as will make the school community ashamed to betray a lack of co-operative feeling. I ask for a spirit of mutual tolerance among you, so that the youth of the future will feel that in making room for its growth, in expressing and asserting itself in its own way, it is not asking for a privilege which the grown up and effective members of society habitually deny to each other. Expression of individuality in social objectives, which is nothing

but the provision for each to serve society in an effective manner, should not be a privilege that is extorted from reluctant hands, but a right that is freely given and joyfully accepted. I ask you, above all, for a harmonious working together of groups, big or small, based either on religion or langauge or caste or some other form of corporate selfishness. A school can be a small exclusive community of members who co-operate in the interest only of the school, or acquires skills and habits which they utilize for their own personal benefit, giving to society no return for the oportunities it has provided for them. We do not want such schools. It is also possible that in a school young boys and girls acquire a certain efficiency, but in after life serve the interests of a small group only, unwittingly or deliberately ignoring the wider human issues. We do not want such schools either. We should not wish to inculcate narrower at the expense of wider loyalties. It is only proper that you should want schools in which the individual members impose upon themselves the discipline necessary for the work of the school and want them so to organize things that the school community as a whole has the feeling of serving the higher cause of the people and, beyond them, even serving human values, in general—serving God. This ultimate, all-pervading loyalty, as the highest value, must

come first. We can serve Him only by serving our people, our neighbour, our fellow-men. In this the school will look to you. If you cannot stand the test, if you cannot, by your lives, convince the school community that in your affection and your service, in your sympathy and your loyalty you can transcend the narrow limits of personal and family interest, of group selfishness, then all else will not be of much avail. For the sake of the future of your land, for the sake of your children to whom you would not easily deny anything, I beg you to create in the life that surrounds the schools and which you, each one of you, does something to build up, that climate of opinion, those habits of helpfulness, co-operation, objectivity, of service and loyalty to the highest causes in which alone the true school, like true humanity, can thrive. The reconstruction of our educational work and the moral regeneration of the people are inextricably interlinked. Let us set our hand courageously to both.

APPENDIX

Dr. Zakir Husain's answers to some questions put to him after the lectures

Q. Regarding classification of individuality, I feel this would hold good for adults but not for children. Children for the most part do not show any such predominant tendency. Actually they move on from one pattern to another several times a day. Is it advisable to label them into patterns in childhood and design educational courses on that basis?

A. I agree that the growing individuality takes time to manifest its definite pattern and it would be educationally unwise to hasten to put labels before the labels can remain valid even for a short period. Even so the discussion of the various types of individuality need not have been in vain. It can be of great value even in the years of childhood if it helps to focus the teachers' attention on what really is the basic aim of the educative process, namely the correspondence between the mind which is to be educated, to be helped, that is, in its growth and development towards its inherent specific pattern, and the elements of surrounding culture which are used for its education, growth and development. It would enable the teacher to see that in the early years of school life the children who are to be educated, though they may not conform to the detailed classification of individuality

which I gave in one of my lectures, do yet show one predominant quality, that of practical activity of the restless urge to use hands, of the almost irrepressible propensity to make or unmake things. Education should take congnisance of this almost universally present quality. I am afraid it does not usually do so. It might do well to recognise and use for educative ends the obvious fact, which one can observe as one runs, that practical activity is the predominant quality of the human being during the age period, 7-14. Children, during this period, think as it were with their hands and learn by doing. They appear to recapitulate, in a manner, the whole history of the human race whose intellectual work has grown out of the manual. The recognition of this obivious fact is also the recognition of individuality which, in its nascent stages, fortunately, for public education, does not manifest the diversity which the typological classification of individuality in my first lecture sought to clarify.

I am afraid I tired out my questioner with my rather long summary of Kerschensteiner's classification of individuality and he, therefore, omitted to notice the second principle which I enunciated in my first lecture immediately after the discussion of the principle of individuality, namely, the due recognition in education of the particular stage of development of individuality which grows from a more or less vague and apparently amorphous to a more or less sharply delineated structure. At the stage of development through which boys and girls

pass during the years of required public education, 7-14 years, the urge for practical activity is unmistakable and should, therefore, be recognized in the framing of the programme of their education. The diversification of type will become operative at the secondary stage of education.

Q. In India, on paper at least, we are committed to educational programme aimed at developing the individuality to the fullest. We have faith in a democratic way of life. The schools are, therefore, charged with the responsibility of building democratic citizens, alert and thinking individuals. Education in most countries of the world, including Germany, from where you draw your inspiration, has fallen short in helping an individual develop those habits and attitudes that fulfil the ideals of good neighbour or national or world citizens. Don't you think that by laying too much stress on the individual we are encouraging too great egocentrism? In what way are we measuring an individual's social progress?

A. After the rather lengthy reply I gave to the previous question I admit I am rightly served by this rather long question. I think I should take it up in parts.

The first part seems to me to make a rather unwarranted assertion, unless the simple but all-stultifying phrase, 'on paper at least' is meant to provide for all eventual retracing of steps. That the Indian 'schools are charged with the responsibility of building democratic citizens, alert and

thinking individuals' is more than I could, with my knowledge of Indian schools, muster enough courage to proclaim. If that were so, all that I laboriously wished for in my lectures, all that I, long-windedly perhaps, set forth as the essence of all true education, would have already been achieved. No one would be happier than I if the questioners were right. But I am afraid he is far, very far, indeed, from being that.

The second part refers to the failure of education, in most countries of the world, including by express mention, Germany from where the questioner guesses I draw my inspiration, "in helping an individual develop those habits and attitudes that fulfil the ideals of good neighbour, or national or world citizens". This seems to me to be a rather carelessly sweeping and a rather comprehensive statement. Many countries in the world have, through their school systems, succeeded in bringing up generations of tolerably good citizens and not only 'on paper', education has, indeed, failed in making a sense of world citizenship an operative reality—indeed it has never seriously attempted to attain this objective. We should not fail to remember, however, that formal education is only one of the factors determining human behaviour and that too, I am afraid, not by any means the strongest. But the point is really not who has succeeded and who has failed. The point is to be clear about what we wish our education to be and to do and how we are to set about it—and this in

spite even of every body else's supposed failure or our own imagined successes—on paper at least.

As regards the inspiration I might have drawn from Germany, my simple answer is, I plead guilty. I have learnt a great deal from German thinkers, educators and am happy to acknowledge it. It does not mean, however, that I am not indebted to others for the development of my way of thinking. I am as much, if not more, beholden to many Indian educators, as well as to Swiss, English and American. I consider truth and wisdom to be my own lost belongings and hasten to pick them up whenever I happen to find them.

The third part of the question deals with the danger of too much stress on the individual encouraging too great egocentrism. I am afraid the word 'individual' has widely misled the questioner. Human beings are all individuals. The human mind is an individual mind. The altruistic individual, the social individual, the objective individual, the heterocentric individual are all just as much individuals as the egocentric individual. Then the expression in the question "too much stress" seems to me to beg the question. The recognition of individuality as the only possible basis on which the edifice of a free moral personality can be raised, can't be described as "too much stress", it is just due recognition of an obvious, but unfortunately neglected, fact, for, from the very nature of the case, the educative process has to direct itself to the individual. It only seeks to proceed

reasonably and fruitfully by recognising the characteristic relief of an individuality, at a certain stage of its development, and making it work on and assimilate the goods of culture, which are products of a similar mental structure. This exclusive dependence of individuality for its proper development on goods of culture, goods, which the society in which it is placed makes available for the former's development, is the meeting ground between the individual and his society. And, as I took some pains to explain in my discussion of the principle of activity in education, the skills and qualities which accrue in the course of the assimilation of goods of culture can be described as education only when they are used in the service of objective values. Education, I sought to maintain, is an individually organized sense of commitment to such values, awakened by the cultural goods of society. This commitment expresses itself in social action.

In order to avoid the inpression that I was referring to this social aspect of education only by implication I enunciated the fifth principle which, as I saw it, was valid for all education and called it the social concern of education. It postulates as an objective of education the steadily growing approach of society to a better and juster and more graceful way of life. The full growth of the individual mind and the moral vigour and development of the collective social existence go hand in hand. I expressly lamented in my second lecture that

this principle of individual and social mutuality was seldom kept in view in the organization of our education. It was to that end that I strongly advocated the organisation of our educational institutions as units of community living, as communities of work, manual and mental, and as communities of shared values and shared standards of excellence. I used fairly unequivocal language, for, as I see, I said, "Unless this principle becomes the life-breath of our educational institutions, all other reform will be just patchwork".

I am surprised the questioner missed the discussion of this point in my lecture. I hope this statement will satisfy him.

Q. In education should there be a place for arts music, singing, dancing and other forms of cultural activities in the lower stages. If so how should they be introduced?

A. Of course, there should be a place for art and music and song and dance in the school. My whole thesis about the nature of the educational process lends support to this. For these activities are some of the important cultural goods which can contribute to the cultivation of the individual mind. Children should be exposed to these elements of culture. I would only plead that these elements should, in the earlier stages, be taken principally from Indian life. If, as I maintain, the mind can be truly educated only by cultural goods

adequate to its own structure it is evident that the cultural goods of the people to whom one belongs must be the most effective instruments of its cultivation. We may not set out to educate generation after generation of Indians blind to the beauties of their own art, deaf to the harmonies of their own music and ignorant of and indifferent to the body of significant gesture and movement evolved by their people. But the axiom of congruence and correspondence between the mind to be educated and the goods of culture used for its education should never be lost sight of. To elucidate it by an exaggeration, we may not officiously set about the impossible task of educating the colour-blind through painting and the deaf or the unmusical through music.

As a matter of fact, what I have said should have been obvious. But I am afraid the question was put to express the dichotomy between work and cultural activity. Now I do not subscribe to that arbitrary division. Working at making a good table, or weaving serviceable cloth, trying to play the sitar well, solving a problem in mathematics, grappling with a moral choice and singing a song, are all cultural activities to me and all can, within their respective limits, be educative. I certainly do not fight shy of the introduction of art and music in school; I, indeed welcome it. Others need not be alarmed at the introduction in schools of useful productive work, carefully planned, conscientiously executed, freely criticised and generously appreciated.

Q. If basic education is a failure, why not put an end to it at once? Is is not wise to learn from experience?

A. I can't very well deny the wisdom of learning by experience. But I can not easily concede the claim to be wise without any real experience! If I have not tried a thing I am usually cautious in pronouncing a dogmatic opinion about it; I am much more averse to dogmatic action against it. If the idea behind a certain project or scheme seems to me to be sound and some, even partial, experience from practice seems to confirm its soundness, I would be anxious to see that the scheme is tried fully and uninhibitedly in order to find how it works out and whether it confirms or contradicts my view of it. That seems to me the only proper way to to proceed. It presupposes genuineness, honesty and a little patience.

Now, my view about the original scheme of Basic Education has been and continues to be that it is abundantly sound in principle and appears to me, by no manner of means, to be unfeasible in practice. I have personally experienced its principles worked out successfully. But with the limited knowledge that I have of its working as a wide-spread system of elementary education in the country I can say that it has, in most cases, not been given a fair trial. Its basic ideas have not been adequately elaborated, requisite preparation to put them into practice has not been made; those responsible for the implementation of the scheme have in a large

number of cases not applied themselves to the task with the required energy in a single-minded manner: teachers and inspectors have not usually received the requisite training; a generally prevailing dichotomy between Basic and Non-Basic School working at the same level has betrayed or at least been interpreted as evidence of a divided mind in places which are important for the shaping of educational policy; the irksome absence in a number of places of the proper and mutually understood relationship of the Basic School with other educational institutions—the high schools and the universities—has engendered the crippling feeling that Basic Education is a meddlesome intrusion in an area of complacent and restful placidity. These and many similar factors have not allowed Basic Education to be given a fair trial. How could a scheme of education of such far-reaching significance and based on such manifestly sound educational, psychological and sociological foundations be declared to have failed before it has really been honestly tried. I do not wish to give the impression that nothing in this behalf has been done. Much, indeed is being attempted and, as ideas get clarified and as prejudice dies down, much more will be done. I hope, more effectively and more successfully. Education is, in any case, a plant of slow growth. The questioner need not set out impetuously to pull this one out by the root 'at once'. It might do her good to remember that we have not succeeded in putting an end at once to the weeds that have been growing long enough, indeed,

in the educational field, whose failure as healthy plants is patent. No, Basic Education can not be said to have failed. It awaits being honestly tried !

Q. The moral and mental degradation of the pupils of to-day is self evident from the various reports coming in the Press. Of what is this the outcome ?

A. The questioner need not be too alarmed with the Press reports of what he calls moral and mental degradation of the pupils. Since the normal is commonplace and the abnormal being sensational sells, the Press is usually not concerned with the normal and hastens to report the abnormal. If the questioner's own experience of educational institutions confirms the reports of the abnormal as the general then it is certainly a matter of serious concern. Without subscribing to the rather dismal picture which the Press seems to present of our educational effort I can sympathise with the questioner's concern about the comparative inefficiency of our educational institutions as places of moral and intellectual growth. Moral and intellectual standards are, by general admission, on the decline. To discuss the reasons in any detail would involve a thorough criticism of our education and this obviously is not the occasion for it. But certain reasons suggest themselves almost instantly :

(1) The very rapid expansion of educational facilities at all levels in recent years without the necessary preparation to make that expansion

effective. This has led to the indifferent recruitment of large bodies of half-baked under-paid teachers to look after a growing army of young pupils in a world of changing standards in ill-equipped schools and colleges;

(2) The general indifference of the educational programme to the stage of development of the pupils and to the type of individuality they might represent. This makes education an unreal extraneous operation;

(3) The very one-sided choice generally of theoretical literary goods of culture for education even when the children's manifest requirement is for educational activity;

(4) The lack of provision in the educational institution for the cultivation of the social and the objective aspects of mind;

(5) Absence of opportunity for the pupils to exercise initiative and spontaneity under the smothering weight of written essay-type examinations in a growing number of subjects of a similar mental structure taught exclusively with a view to impart more and more information to the almost utter neglect of their educational value;

(6) Insistence on passive receptivity to the almost utter exclusion of active experience;

(7) The prevailing and curiously unchallenged notion of the schools and colleges as instructional shops and not as communities of living and working together in the service of shared higher values, without any kind of commitment and without anything or any one to look up to, with a concept of discipline

as an imposition by force and not as a free acceptance due to insight and understanding.

I can add some more, but these should be enough to set one thinking and to determine in a positive manner to set things right. It is obvious that mere patchwork will not set this state of things right. That, indeed, was the reason why I selected as the subject of my lectures "The Principles of Educational Reconstruction". I have the feeling that our education as at present organised does not make a good showing on any of the counts which, as I explained, made education a worthwhile activity. It seems clear to me that we have to do some hard conscientious thinking about our education and require a great deal of courage and tenacity to go along the way that thinking prescribes. There will be some bad reports in the Press even then, but we shall be able to read them with an easier conscience !

Q. As a parent, I am dismayed at the present prospect where the objective, the age groups, the length of courses, the curricula and the media of instruction at all stages of primary, secondary and university education are being basically changed. While experiments of a pilot nature based on research may indicate the need for structural change the present experimentation en masse *is frightening and looks irresponsible. Am I wrong ?*

A. I can very well sympathize with you and I do not think you are quite wrong. You would be that if you were impatient of all innovations and

experiments in education, for that, indeed, is unavoidable. Man is essentially an experimenting animal. But I see you are not impatient of experimentation. What makes you feel uneasy is the precipitate haste with which changes are being introduced in the entire field of education. I personally would not have been uneasy even about the haste; if I were convinced that the changes sought to be introduced have been adequately thought through and sufficiently prepared for. Indian education has been like a stagnant pond for quite a while, and with freedom to do something about it, so many new ideas have been flung into it that waves seem to cut across each other in an almost bewildering complex pattern. Those responsible for education are anxious not to give the feeling that they ignore new ideas and if an idea has not to be seriously worked for, then its acceptance is the easiest thing to do. It makes good headlines and one gets the flattering feeling that much is happening in education. Not infrequently this is a very false sense of self-satisfied complacency. My own impression is that there are, at the moment, many fruitful ideas in Indian education, but none of them, literally none of them, appears to me to have behind it that energy, that drive, that preparation, that sense of urgency, that sincerity of purpose which can promise its effective realization. An idea does not materialize only by being talked or written about or even by having a considerable sum of money spent in its name.

It requires the intelligent and devoted endeavour of numberless people determined to see it through. It demands a vigilant and consistent follow-up; it involves a number of inevitable consequential measures. In the anxiety to do many things quick most of these conditions are neglected. That does create an uneasy feeling. I do hope that as we gradually settle down to our new tasks and learn to do them thoroughly and well that feeling will become less and less justified. One has to have much patience in this period of transition.

Q. You say that education is to help the young develop their own values by bringing them in contact with goods of culture. But people in power can bring one kind of goods of culture rather than others thereby distorting the development of the young to suit their purposes. Is there a natural compensation for such distortion or can it only be met by removing such people from power, which is often not possible?

A. Yes. There is no way to the development of a free moral personality but that of letting the mind develop its own system of values by active contact with the goods of culture which are the creations of similar minds and embodiments of their cherished values. This process is possible only in a society that respects human personality, regards it as an end, and hopes to build the perfection of the whole on the fullest possible development of what is specific to each part. This is

what a truly democratic education seeks to do and I had ventured to spell out the characteristic principles underlying such education. But there can be a pseudo-educational effort of another kind which does not aim at letting the part grow and develop to its possible perfection but at forcing it into an arbitrarily determined shape and stamping it into an externally prescribed mould. This is only saying that the history of man is a chequered tale of man free and man in chains. Not so infrequently has he been in chains and his life, his values, his preferences have been imposed on him by authority in all its ugly and unabashed nakedness. But not infrequently, too, has he come out triumphant, breaking his chains and marching joyously and confidently on the road that leads from individuality through character to personality. Education in the hands of unscrupulous and absolute authority is a weapon fraught with grave dangers to true human development. The question, how to get rid of such authority, is really not only or even principally an educational question; it is a social and political choice of a most comprehensive and a momentous nature.

Yes, there is a natural compensation for the kind of distortion you have in view. But it takes time to materialise and comes the hard way, the very hard and sometimes the very long way. It is the divine in man, the creative spontaneity that resides in the human breast that rebels against this inhuman imposition. It is beaten not seldom, and

yet it persists till it wins in the end. It attempts the apparently impossible to discover what really is possible. The chains are broken and man can breathe and grow freely and true education again becomes possible.

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